

Manga
Drama/Romance
USA \$9.98

The One I Love™

COMBINING CLAMP'S LEGENDARY STORYTELLING, COLOR ARTWORK AND ELEGANT PROSE, *The One I Love* PROVIDES INSIGHT INTO THE CREATORS' INTIMATE LIVES AND PASSIONS. THIS UNIQUE AND ROMANTIC 12-STORY ANTHOLOGY DIVES INTO THE HEART OF THE MATTER OF INSECURITY AND HONESTY, MARRIAGE AND INDEPENDENCE, AND, OF COURSE, THE SINGLE SUBJECT CLAMP SEEMS TO KNOW BEST: LOVE.



ISBN 1490503959



45573-00959-1



www.TOKYOPOP.com

The One I Love

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO



CLAMP

The One I Love

only Japanese & American (1997)

わ
た
し
の
す
き
な
ひ
と

BY
CLAMP



HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO



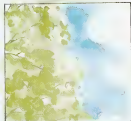
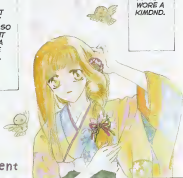
BUT
I DID
MY
BEST
TO
WEAR
IT.

I PUT IT
ON BY
MYSELF, SO
IT MIGHT
LOOK A
LITTLE
WEIRD.

TODAY I
WORE A
KIMONO.

SCENE1 different

I WANTED TO
TRY SOMETHING A
LITTLE DIFFERENT,
TO BECOME A LITTLE
DIFFERENT.



W
A
T
A
S
H
I
N
O
S
U
K
I
N
A
H
I
T
O

STAFF

COMIC 猫井みっく

STORY・ESSAY 大川七瀬

DESIGN BATSUKI IGARASHI
NANASE OHKAWA

SPECIAL THANKS/MUKONA APAPA
KARYOU



AND THOSE
NEGATIVE
FEELINGS
IGNITE A
SPARK THAT
EXPLODES
INSIDE ME,
AND THEN
IT BECOMES
MORE THAN
JUST A LITTLE
ARGUMENT.

THE LONGER
I HOLD THEM IN,
THE DEEPER
THE NEGATIVE
FEELINGS SEEP
INTO MY HEART.

I HATE
FIGHTING.

BUT I HATE
HOLDING MY
FEELINGS IN
EVEN MORE.



AND THEN...

BUT
IT'S HARD
TO SAY WHAT
I FEEL...

I WANT TO
APOLOGIZE,
I WANT TO
TELL YOU
THAT I'M
SORRY.

...THINGS
ENO...

AT LEAST,
THAT'S HOW
IT FEELS...

SO
INSTEAD...

...I WORE
A KIMONO
TODAY.



BUT BOTH
HE AND
I WERE
STUBBORN
AND I
COULDN'T
SAY THE
TWO
WORDS
THAT
MATTERED.



IT
WAS
OVER
SOME-
THING
SMALL.

WE
HAD A
FIGHT
A WEEK
AGO.



MAYBE
IT WAS
MY
FAULT
AFTER
ALL...



I'M
SORRY.



AFTER WE
FOUGHT,
IF YOU HAD
ONLY...

BUT...
YOU'RE
TO BLAME
TOO.

IF YOU HAD
SMILED, EVEN
A LITTLE...I
COULD HAVE
BEEN A
LITTLE MORE
HONEST,
INSTEAD OF
STUBBORN.



OH,
IT'S SO
EASY
TO SAY
WHEN
HE'S NOT
HERE...



I WAS SAVING
THIS ONE FOR
A SPECIAL
OCCASION, SO
I'VE NEVER WORN
IT, NOT EVEN TO
CHECK AND MAKE
SURE I LOOK
GOOD IN IT!



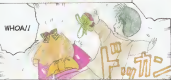
B-BUT,
WHAT IF I
DON'T LOOK
GOOD IN THIS
KIMONO?!

OR
MAYBE
THE LIGHT
BLUE ONE!

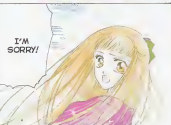
Oh, you
and Sarah
are going to
come.

OH!
MAYBE
I SHOULD
HAVE WORN
THE RED
ONE!

WHOA!!



I'M
SORRY!



I'VE ALWAYS
FELT DIFFERENT
IN A KIMONO.



I WANTED TO
BE DIFFERENT
TODAY, SO I
WOKE UP EARLY
AND PUT ON A
KIMONO.



BUT SOMEHOW,
IN A KIMONO, I'M
AT PEACE, EVEN
WHEN PERFORMING
MY LESSONS.
I HOPE THAT...



MY MOTHER
HAS SCOLDED
ME FOR BEING
AGITATED...

...IF
I CAN BECOME
DIFFERENT IN
A KIMONO,
I CAN ALSO
BECOME
HONEST.





YOU
WANTED
TO BECOME
DIFFERENT
TOO.

HEY.



I'M
SORRY.



W-WHY ARE
YOU DRESSED
LIKE THAT? YOU
ALWAYS WEAR
JEANS.



END

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

Have you ever wanted to become someone different? I know I have. Mostly, I feel like turning into someone else when I'm either disgusted with myself or thoroughly depressed. Sometimes I find myself thinking: *How could I have been so stupid? If there were a ditch I'd jump into it. Or... What was I thinking when I said that?!*

So this story is based on an experience I had. It wasn't a romantic experience (too bad, right?), but rather an incident between a friend and myself. She and I go way back and have been friends for about fifteen years. But three years ago, I had an argument with her. And it was over something insignificant.

Usually, we laugh off stuff like that—but at that time—we couldn't. We must have been tired after endless all-nighters. (I bet you're wondering why all the all-nighters. Too bad, keep on wondering.)

SCENE 1/CHIGAU

(Different) ちがう

Hello. This is CLAMP. For those of you wondering who we are, let me explain. CLAMP is a collective of four people—Satsuki Igarashi, Nanase Ohkawa, Mick Nekoi, and Mokona Apapa. We have created and produced several manga.

This project, *The One I Love*, is a collection of essays centered around girls' love and the insecurity, happiness, regret, and satisfaction that accompanies that love.

Each chapter includes seven pages of manga illustrated by Mick Nekoi and a short essay section written by me, Nanase Ohkawa. We hope you enjoy this journey through love.

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

Anyway, most of the time my friend and I are courteous of each other's feelings, but for some reason when we parted that day, neither of us felt good about our exchange. After agonizing over our "fight" for a week, I decided I wanted to apologize to her, so I called and asked her to meet me. Of course, there was no guarantee that things wouldn't go terribly wrong, again.

I ended up wearing a kimono to our rendezvous. I figured that if I changed who I was maybe it would change the outcome. I guess, the more you love someone, the harder it is to say you're sorry.

So, whenever you have a hard time apologizing—remember this story. If you can become someone different than the person who had the fight, you might be able to deal with the situation a bit more honestly.

By the way, the day I wore that kimono, my friend wore her choir uniform! (great minds think alike) And thankfully, she is still one of my best friends.

SCENE2 Cute

I THINK
CUTE IS
SUCH A
VALUABLE
WORD.

I CAN
SORT OF
UNDERSTAND
BEAUTIFUL,
BUT I HAVE A
HARD TIME
ACCEPTING
CUTE.

YET...

WHY?

IT'S
REALLY
HARD TO
ACCEPT
THE WORD
CUTE.

I CAN
SORT OF
VISUALIZE
IT.

I CAN
UNDERSTAND
BEAUTIFUL.







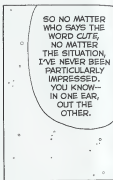
SOMEONE
COULD
TELL ME I'M
CUTE, BUT
I WOULDN'T
GET HAPPY
OR EXCITED
ABOUT IT.



BUT...



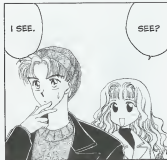
WHY?



SO NO MATTER
WHO SAYS THE
WORD CUTE,
NO MATTER
THE SITUATION,
I'VE NEVER BEEN
PARTICULARLY
IMPRESSED.
YOU KNOW—
IN ONE EAR,
OUT THE
OTHER.



THAT'S
WHY...



I SEE.

SEE?



FOR NINETEEN
YEARS, I'VE SAID
THIS OR THAT IS
CUTE WHENEVER
AND FOR WHATEVER.

...I'VE
ALWAYS SAID
YOU CAN'T
TRUST THE
WORD CUTE.



WHAT
DO YOU
THINK
OF ME?

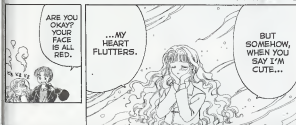


...I ALWAYS
FIGURE
THAT THEY'RE
JUST BEING
PLEASANT
AND MAKING
CONVERSATION.

SO WHEN
SOMEONE
TELLS ME
THAT I'M
CUTE...



END



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

I detested that pink skirt, just the *thought* of wearing it made me sad (yeah, yeah, I've always been a pretty simple person). The skirt looked so awful on me (or so I thought), and I felt like the most "un-cute" person in the world.

However, my uncles and aunts kept telling me how cute I looked in my skirt. And so, I became certain that *cute* was used as a social pleasantry. If you just say *cute*, you can gracefully survive even the most awkward of circumstances.

Maybe they really did think I looked cute, but since I was just a kid, I felt hurt when I realized the word *cute* could mean—cute, kinda cute, really cute, and "I have no idea what to say, so I'll just play it safe with *cute*."

SCENE 2/KAWAII

(Cute) かわいい

The word *cute* really is very vague. I'm sure all of you have said the word *cute* recently. Like when you say: "What a cute little girl" or "That outfit is so cute."

Cute is such a convenient word. It can be used in all sorts of situations. I know I use *cute* more than four times a day, and yet, I don't even understand what it means entirely. I know the gist of it, but if you asked me to explain it in sixty words or less, I'd be hopelessly lost.

Long ago, I was involved in an incident involving the word *cute*. One of my relative's was getting married, and I was planning on wearing this adorable natural-fiber one-piece dress to the wedding. But that morning, I spilled milk on the dress, and had to wear a pink skirt instead.

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

Even as an adult (although I'm still a kid inside), I don't understand what *cute* truly means.

Sometimes I feel as if it has some sort of special meaning, and sometimes I don't. When people tell me my accessories or my clothes are cute, it makes me happy. But on the other hand, they may not have meant anything special by it, and so getting giddy would be kind of out of line.

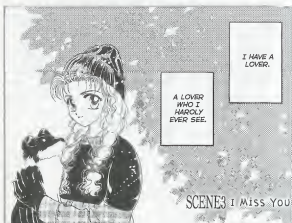
I used to try to think about the subtext behind the word, before I reacted to it. But recently, things have changed. Even though I have my doubts about *cute*, when a certain someone tells me I'm cute, I tend to lose my composure. I get all nervous and happy, and for that entire day, I feel like I'm on cloud nine.

I wonder why.

So, truth be told, this story is based on my own personal experience. Huh? You want to know who this person is? Well, maybe I'll tell you when it's just the two of us. But then again...sometimes things are better left unsaid.

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと



...OR
YOUR
WORK?

WHICH
IS MORE
IMPORTANT
TO YOU,
ME...



...WE CONTINUE,
AND I FIND
MYSELF ABOUT
TO UTTER A PHRASE
LOATHED BY MEN
FAR AND WIDE...



WHAT ABOUT
THE GIRL WHO
FEELS SHE
HAS TO
SAY IT?



GUYS HAVE
A TOUGH
TIME WITH
THAT LINE.

ALL THE
MAGAZINES SAY
THAT'S THE WORST
THING A GIRL
COULD SAY.

BUT
STILL...



BUT...



WHEN I
CAN'T SEE
YOU, I DON'T
KNOW IF
SOMETHING'S
HAPPENED
TO YOU.

I DON'T KNOW
IF YOU'RE
WORKING,
OR IF YOU'RE
WITH SOMEONE
ELSE.



BUT
WHAT IF
IT'S ME?!

CAN'T YOU
AT LEAST
LEAVE YOUR
ANSWERING
MACHINE ON?
ASS-HOLE!



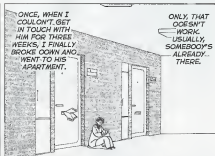
I SHOULD
WAIT OUTSIDE
HIS OFFICE!

ONCE, WHEN I
COULDN'T GET
IN TOUCH WITH
HIM FOR THREE
WEEKS, I FINALLY
BROKE DOWN AND
WENT TO HIS
APARTMENT.

IT
MUST
BE
TOUGH
BEING AN
EDITOR.



ONLY, THAT
DOESN'T
WORK.
USUALLY,
SOMEBODY'S
ALREADY
THERE.



THAT'S ALL.
NOTHING
COMPLICATED.

I JUST
WANT TO
SEE HIM.



THAT'S ALL.
NOTHING
COMPLICATED.

I JUST
WANT TO
SEE HIM.

OR AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS LIKE THAT...?

FOR A GIRL...

...HAPPINESS
IS BEING WITH
THE ONE SHE
LOVES.

FOR A GIRL...

...HAPPINESS
IS BEING WITH
THE ONE SHE
LOVES.

I'M NOT
SUBSCRIBING
TO ANY
NEWSPAPERS
OR MAGAZINES!
AND I ALREADY
HAVE CABLE!

SHUT UP,
ALREADY!
I'M HAVING
SOME
PRODUCTIVE
THOUGHTS
HERE!

I'M NOT
SUBSCRIBING
TO ANY
NEWSPAPERS
OR MAGAZINES!
AND I ALREADY
HAVE CABLE!

SHUT UP,
ALREADY!
I'M HAVING
SOME
PRODUCTIVE
THOUGHTS
HERE!

EVERYONE
SAYS
THEY'RE
JEALOUS.

TRY
"A MANGA
ARTIST IS MY
LOVER" AND
THE ROMANCE
FLIES OUT
OF IT.

YOU
KNOW
THAT
SONS
CALLED
"SANTA
CLAUS
IS MY
LOVER"?

TRY
"A MANGA
ARTIST IS MY
LOVER" AND
THE ROMANCE
FLIES OUT
OF IT.

YOU
KNOW
THAT
SONGS
CALLED
"SANTA
CLAUS
IS MY
LOVER"?



AND,
THERE
ARE NO
"OFF"
HOURS.

HE DOESN'T
GET PAID
VACATION LIKE
SALARIED
WORKERS.

HIS TIME IS
SO FAR AWAY
FROM BEING
FLEXIBLE.



AND,
THERE
ARE NO
"OFF"
HOURS.

HE DOESN'T
GET PAID
VACATION LIKE
SALARIED
WORKERS.

HIS TIME IS
SO FAR AWAY
FROM BEING
FLEXIBLE.



AND,
THERE
ARE NO
"OFF"
HOURS.

HE DOESN'T
GET PAID
VACATION LIKE
SALARIED
WORKERS.

HIS TIME IS
SO FAR AWAY
FROM BEING
FLEXIBLE.

NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!

THEY THINK BECAUSE MY BOYFRIEND DOESN'T HAVE A NINE-TO-FIVE JOB, HIS TIME IS FLEXIBLE.

WE COULDN'T EVEN SPEND MY BIRTHDAY TOGETHER!!

AND VALENTINE'S DAY, AND CHRISTMAS TOO!

AND THE YEAR BEFORE!

IT WAS LIKE THIS LAST YEAR!

WE COULDN'T EVEN SPEND MY BIRTHDAY TOGETHER!!

AND VALENTINE'S DAY, AND CHRISTMAS TOO!

AND THE YEAR BEFORE!

IT WAS LIKE THIS LAST YEAR!

WE COULDN'T EVEN SPEND MY BIRTHDAY TOGETHER!!

AND VALENTINE'S DAY, AND CHRISTMAS TOO!

AND THE YEAR BEFORE!

IT WAS LIKE THIS LAST YEAR!

WE COULDN'T EVEN SPEND MY BIRTHDAY TOGETHER!!

AND VALENTINE'S DAY, AND CHRISTMAS TOO!

AND THE YEAR BEFORE!

IT WAS LIKE THIS LAST YEAR!



GUESS YOU
WANTED TO
SEE ME AS
MUCH AS...



I'M SORRY
TO BUG YOU
WHEN YOU'RE
BUSY.

BUT I
SOMETIMES
FEEL
INSECURE.

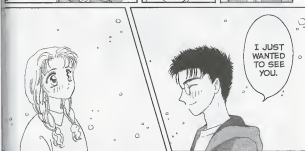
SO
PLEASE
TRY TO
VISIT ME
WHEN YOU
CAN.

BECAUSE
THAT'S ALL I
NEED TO BE
THE HAPPIEST
GIRL IN THE
WORLD.

AND I'M
SORRY FOR
HAVING
THESE SILLY
THOUGHTS.



END



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

CLAMP has always been impressed by Okazaki-sensei's kindness toward women. He's the kind of guy who buys each of us a book whenever we go to the bookstore. But even an honest and kind soul like Okazaki-sensei gets stopped in his tracks when his girlfriend asks him, "Don't you want to see me?"

Girls are very complex.

It's natural to want to be with someone you love, even if it's just a crush. A girl feels both secure and content when she's with the person she loves—if only for a moment. Of course, it's also natural for lovers to experience paranoia and curiosity, but that's a whole other story.

SCENE 3/AITAI

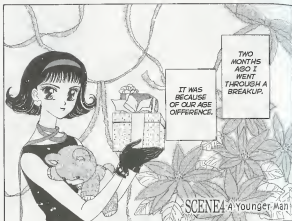
(I Miss You) あいたい

This story is based on a conversation CLAMP had with one of our few remaining friends, the manga-ka Okazaki Takeshi-sensei.

Okazaki-sensei once mentioned that because of his line of work, he had no time to see his girlfriend. His girlfriend, unlike the heroine of this story, had a part-time job with flexible hours. But they still had trouble making time to see each other.

On top of that, Okazaki-sensei was famous for disappearing (heh), and must have frequently stressed out his editors. The same could be said about how his girlfriend probably felt.

Because Okazaki-sensei and I were doing projects for the same magazine at the time, we had many opportunities to talk on the phone. Every so often, he would complain about how lonely he felt because he never got a chance to see his girlfriend.



...IT GETS
ONE
HUNDRED
TIMES
BUSIER.

OUR BAKERY
IS ALWAYS
BUSY, BUT
SINCE WE
MAKE CAKES
HERE,
AROUND
CHRISTMAS
SEASON...

WHAT I MEAN IS
THAT I WORK
IN AN OFFICE,
BUT WHEN THE
BAKERY IS
SHORT OF HELP,
I END UP
HELPING OUT.

MY FAMILY
RUNS A
BAKERY, SO
I'M ALWAYS
BUSY.



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO
わたしのすきなひと



HEY EVERYBODY,
IT'S TEN!
QUITTING TIME!!
QUITTING TIME!!

YAY!

YAY!

IT'S TEN
O'CLOCK!!

ding-dong, ding-dong



キン
キン
キン

GOOD
WORK,
GUYS!

GOOD
WORK!

UM...

ALL THESE
CAKES AND MONIE
FOR ME.

CHRISTMAS.

LAST YEAR, I,
BAKED MY OWN
AND GAVE IT TO MY
BOYFRIEND.

BUT THIS YEAR, I'LL BE
SPENDING CHRISTMAS
WITH "THE GUYS."

THIS
BOY'S ONE
OF THE
PART-TIME
HELPERS.

WHAT
IS IT?

YES?

THE DAUGHTER
IS OBLIGATED
TO HELP AS
WELL, SINCE ALL
THESE PEOPLE
HAVE COME TO
HELP WORK.

SO, AT YEAR'S END,
THE BAKERY HIRES
HIGH SCHOOL AND
COLLEGE STUDENTS.

WELCOME!

THAT'S
2800 YEN.
THANK
YOU VERY
MUCH!!

I WAS
CELEBRATING
A COZY
CHRISTMAS
FOR TWO, THE
KIND YOU
SEE ON
TELEVISION,
FOLK DANCING
AND ALL.

YOU
KNOW...

...LAST
CHRISTMAS
I DIDN'T
HELP OUT.



IT'S NOT LIKE I WASN'T SELF-CONSCIOUS, EITHER.

MY FRIENDS KEPT TELLING ME THAT DATING A YOUNGER GUY WAS TROUBLE.

THAT I COULD NEVER COMPETE AGAINST A YOUNGER GIRL.

I WOULD HAVE RATHER DATED SOMEONE MY OWN AGE.

I CANNOT FORGIVE THAT JERK!!

SO, HIS NEW GIRLFRIEND IS ABOUT HIS AGE. HE WAS SELF-CONSCIOUS BECAUSE I WAS THREE YEARS OLDER THAN HIM.

AND THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM, HE BLUBBERED ON ABOUT HOW HE COULDN'T DATE AN OLDER WOMAN.



BUT I DIDN'T FALL IN LOVE WITH AN AGE. IT JUST HAPPENED THAT THE BOY I FELL IN LOVE WITH WAS YOUNGER THAN ME.





WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

This story evolved from a conversation I had with the actor in the lead role of the live action version of *Tokyo Babylon*, Tonesaku Toshihide-san. In Shibuya, a few days after the last video shoot, we held a wrap party for the staff. The conversation took place on our way to sing karaoke. I don't remember what started it, but we got to talking about age and love. The guys' opinions ranged everywhere from younger girls were best, to the same age was best—all the way to—age doesn't matter. It was out of control.

The girls all laughed, "That's a guy for ya." When I asked Tonesaku-san what he thought, he chuckled and asked, "Well, what do girls think? Do they have a hang-up about age?"

"I suppose at least a little," I said "if the guy is younger, the girl gets self-conscious about being older."

"Guys feel self conscious too if they're younger." He answered with a smile.

SCENE 4/TOSHISHITA

(A Younger Man) と し し た

It seems age is always a barrier in relationships. When I was little, I loved riding on roller coasters and I always gave my parents a hard time at the amusement park because I would insist on riding them—or else. But I was only four, and the roller coasters always had height limits: "If you are shorter than this height, then you can't ride."

And, of course, I was always a lot shorter. I was also a lot younger than the six-year-old age limit. So I cried and cried, and threatened to scream and shout until they would let me on. I sang "Ookina Kuri No Shita De" (Underneath the Chestnut Tree) and danced and gave the park attendants a hard time.

I never got my wish. I began to believe that the reason I couldn't ride roller coasters was because they hated me. So I decided to hate them back and refused to ride them, even if they came up to me and apologized. I bore a total grudge against roller coasters. Ever since then, I haven't been able to ride roller coasters (although now it's because I'm scared!).

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

They say that when you're surprised, fish scales pop out of your eyes. That being said, I would say a whole fish popped out of my eyes. (I'm not joking!) I have five girlfriends who had difficulties while dating younger guys. They all said the same thing: that while it was fun to be the older woman, they still felt insecure. For that reason, I've always assumed that women who date younger men tend to struggle in their relationships. Now, I realize that it's not just the women who feel self-conscious about it, but the men as well.

I guess age has always been a mighty wall to scale.

And with love, that wall is especially high. If any of you are bothered by being the older or younger person in the relationship, don't hold in your feelings. Just tell your partner how you feel. Chances are, they are worried and feeling insecure about something, too.

Like in my roller coaster example, a tiny seed of doubt might develop into a misunderstanding, which can then form a wall between you and the person you love.

P.S. I'd say the deterioration in my relationship with roller coasters is one hundred percent my fault.



SCENE5 suddenly



LOVE ALWAYS HAPPENS SUDDENLY.

I FALL IN LOVE EASILY, BUT ALWAYS WITH GUYS WHO ARE VERY DIFFERENT FROM ME.

AT FIRST I DIDN'T FEEL ANYTHING.

AT THE SAME TIME I WAS DATING A GUY, I BECAME ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE AT WORK.



TAKE THESE COLOR PROOFS BACK TO THE PRINTER NOW!



OH, CAN YOU ORDER THIS 135 KG* WEIGHT PAPER FROM THE PAPER COMPANY?



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO わたしのすきなひと





HE'S VERY QUIET AND NOT VERY PERSONABLE, AND I CAN NEVER FIGURE OUT WHAT HE'S THINKING. IT'S LIKE HE LEFT HIS PERSONALITY A HUNDRED MILES OUTSIDE OF THE OFFICE.



FRANKLY, I DON'T REALLY GET ALONG WITH HIM.



AH! FINALLY, THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR! I ALWAYS GET A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT WHEN THE PRODUCTS COME IN!



OH GOODY! THEY'RE FINALLY DONE!



THE SAMPLES ARE HERE!

HE DOESN'T LOOK RIGHT, EITHER. I LIKE GIVE TO BE MORE...



EH, WHO CARES? THE SAMPLES ARE HERE, AND I'M IN A GOOD MOOD.

UNSOCIAL, AS ALWAYS. CAN'T HE EVER SMILE WHEN HE SEES YOU OR GIVE HIS EMPLOYEES A PAT ON THE SHOULDER OR SOMETHING?



AGHH! WHERE'S THE CORRECTION PEN! I CAN'T FIND THE PEN!!



OUR OFFICE DOES EVERYTHING FROM CD JACKETS TO MAGAZINES TO DIRECT MAIL, JUST ABOUT ANYTHING THAT CAN BE PRINTED.



I WORK IN A DESIGN STUDIO.



I'M A LITTLE PANICKEO.

I HAVE TO DESIGN A CD COVER AND COLOR PROOF A PROMOTIONAL POSTER ON THE SAME DAY!



UH... THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

HE'S MY BOSS, THE HEAD OF THE DESIGN TEAM.







THAT'S WHEN I
REALIZED...



I'D FALLEN
IN LOVE WITH
HIM.



I'LL GO
TO THE
CLIENT.

YOU
CALL
THE
PRINTER!

LOVE...

...CAN REALLY
HAPPEN ALL OF A
SUDDEN, CAN'T IT?



YES
SIR!!

END.

THE
MISTAKE
IS ONLY
ON THE
FRONT CD
COVER, RIGHT?

WHAT?

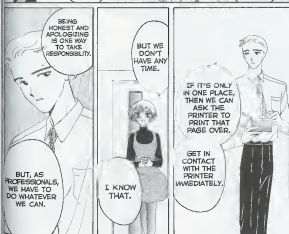


WHAT?



I...
HAVEN'T
CHECKED
EVERYTHING
ELSE
YET.

IS THIS
THE ONLY
MISTAKE?



BEING
HONEST AND
APOLOGIZING
IS ONE WAY
TO TAKE
RESPONSIBILITY.

BUT WE
DON'T
HAVE ANY
TIME.

IF IT'S ONLY
IN ONE PLACE,
THEN WE CAN
ASK THE
PRINTER TO
PRINT THAT
PAGE OVER.

GET IN
CONTACT
WITH THE
PRINTER
IMMEDIATELY.

I KNOW
THAT.

BUT, AS
PROFESSIONALS,
WE HAVE TO
DO WHATEVER
WE CAN.

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

The four of us at CLAMP tend to worry that he pushes himself too hard. We often think Hagiwara-san puts his work before his health. We know he really loves manga and takes pride in his work (and we're proud of that), but we're also a little worried. And so, a few days later, we talked to Hagiwara-san about something else.

"So how is your manuscript coming along?" I asked. "I'm doing the dialogue right now," he answered. "What?! I thought you just finished the dialogue and were working on the drafts," I said with surprise. "Oh, I'm re-doing the dialogue," Hagiwara-san replied matter-of-factly. "B-but what about your deadline? If you're doing the dialogue now, how are you getting any sleep?"

Now, I was clearly concerned.

But Hagiwara-san went on cheerfully. "If I'm doing something for my readers, I want it to be as much fun for them as I can make it, don't you think?"

SCENE 5/TOTSUZEN

(Suddenly) とつぜん

Love always happens suddenly. I love a lot of things. I love Egg McMuffins from McDonalds, the plain hot dog from Mos Burger, the "Shin Megami Tensei" game from Super Famicom; Aloefan body shampoo from House of Rose, and the manga *Jojo's Strange Adventure* (especially the third generation).

I love all those things—and when I think about it—love always happens suddenly with me (just like in old-school manga). A light switches in my head, and all of a sudden, I'm in love. This story evolved from a phone conversation that I had with my trusty "brother" (heh), the manga-ka Hagiwara Kazushi-sensei. As you readers know, Hagiwara-san is the creator of *Bastard!* for *Extended Edition Jump* magazine and I've often called him prior to his frequent deadlines.

Whenever I ask him, "How are you doing?" he always answers, "I'm not doing too good physically, but I've finished the dialogue, and I've already begun rough drafts."

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

At that moment, I thought Hagiwara-san was really amazing. I was always his fan, but right then I fell in "love" with the artist Hagiwara Kazushi-san.

Love really can happen all of a sudden.

All of you probably have a number of reasons for falling in love. There are times when you fall in love with someone who you never thought much of before, and then there are times when someone who's been on your mind suddenly becomes the one you love.

It doesn't matter what triggers it. It doesn't have to be dramatic or cool. Whenever that "love" light bulb goes off in your heart, treasure it. It could be the first step toward a wonderful romance.

SCENE 6 Together



ALL GIRLS
KNOW THAT.
THEY WANT
TO DEVELOP
SOMETHING
THEY CAN
SHARE WITH
THE ONE
THEY LOVE.

IT'S
NATURAL
TO WANT
TO DO
SOMETHING
WITH THE
ONE YOU
LOVE.

IS
SOMETHING
WRONG?







I FELL IN LOVE
WITH HIM, AND
THAT'S HOW
I CAME TO
LOVE THE
HARMONICA.

THE GIRL ISN'T TRYING TOO
HARD. IT'S JUST NICE WHEN
BOTH OF YOU LOVE THE
SAME THING.



SORRY, I
KEPT YOU
WAITING
BECAUSE
I WAS
GETTING
THIS.



WHOA!

PEOPLE SAY THAT
GIRLS WHO TRY TO
SHARE HOBBIES OR
INTERESTS WITH
BOYS THEY LIKE
DON'T KNOW HOW
TO BE INDEPENDENT.
I THINK THAT'S
WRONG.



HE WAS
VERY GOOD
AT PLAYING
THE
HARMONICA.
HE EVEN
PLAYED A
SOLO IN THE
KINDERGARTEN
ORCHESTRA.

BUT IT
BECAME
MY MOST
FAVORITE
INSTRUMENT
IN THE WORLD.



IT'S
NOT LIKE
I EVER
LIKED THE
HARMONICA
BEFORE...

SO I
PRACTICEO
VERY HARD.



I WANTED
TO GET
BETTER
AT THE
HARMONICA
SOMEHOW.



I WANTED TO SHARE
SOMETHING HAPPY
WITH HIM, TO BE
ABLE TO TALK ABOUT
SOMETHING TO-
GETHER.



I KNOW NOW...

I JUST
WANTED
TO HAVE
SOMETHING IN
COMMON WITH
THAT BOY.



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

I've read some magazine articles that claim that girls who are influenced by their boyfriends and like the same things as them, lack both independence and their own identity, but I whole-heartedly disagree. Those girls just want to share something in common with their boyfriends. If they can learn to like the same things, then they've got something that they can do together. It's all about togetherness.

For example, if a girl starts to follow a boy's favorite soccer team, then they can go watch matches together, celebrate wins, and bemoan losses. There is no greater happiness than doing things with the one you love. And if it's something that the person you love also loves, it shouldn't be a hard thing to appreciate, right?

If you ever fall in love, you will experience the magic of sharing. And so, when you do, I hope you enjoy your time together.

SCENE・6/ISSHONI

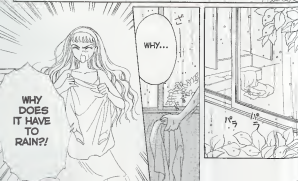
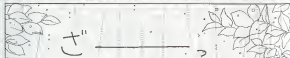
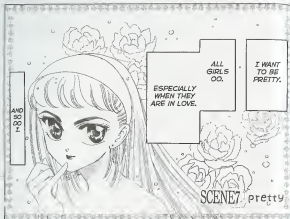
(Together) いっしょに

Being able to share your own happiness with another person is magical. I've found that when I share my happiness with someone else, my own happiness intensifies. Please don't get me wrong, not everything has to be shared. Some things are still best enjoyed while alone. But, the happiness felt when you make someone else happy, or when someone else shares in your happiness... is indescribable.

This essay is based on a story that one of CLAMP's members, Mokona Apapa-chan, told me. It takes place back in the first grade, when she fell in love with a little boy who played the harmonica. Consequently, she decided to play the harmonica, and diligently practiced every single day. I think that Mokona-chan wanted to have something in common with this boy and so became involved in what made him happy. After much practice, Mokona-chan turned into a harmonica girl who could share this hobby with her harmonica boy.

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと



TODAY'S THE DAY I WANTED TO LOOK MY PRETTIEST!

OKAY... WELL, I JUST WANTED TO LOOK AS PRETTY AS I COULD.

OH, HOW COULD THIS BE HAPPENING TO ME?

GOD, YOU'RE SO EVIL!

LOOK.

MY CURLS ARE COMING OUT ALREADY!

WITH THE HUMIDITY...

TODAY IS THE DAY I CAN BE WITH THE ONE I LOVE...

AGHHH!

A-A-ALREADY TWO O'CLOCK?!

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO MEET AT THREE! THE TRAIN TAKES THIRTY MINUTES AND I ONLY HAVE THIRTY MINUTES TO PICK OUT MY CLOTHES, DO MY MAKEUP AND GET TO THE STATION!

Major Panic

THE SKIRT I PICKED OUT IS LONG AND WHITE. SO IF I GET DIRT ON IT I'LL CRY, FOR SURE.

WHY? WHY DOES IT HAVE TO RAIN TODAY?!

AND LOOK!

MY HAIR IS STRAIGHT, BUT CURLY GOES BETTER WITH THIS OUTFIT.

IT TOOK OVER AN HOUR!

THE CLOTHES!

THE PURSE!

THE SHOES!

EVEN THE JEWELRY!

I EVEN CURLED MY HAIR BEFORE I WENT TO BED!

IT WAS GOING TO BE PERFECT!

I TOOK TWO HOURS TO SELECT EVERYTHING!

FORGET
IT! I'LL
JUST
WEAR
THIS!!!

I'M
LATE!!!

I'D BE
BETTER OFF
WEARING
A GODZILLA
COSTUME AND
TRYING
TO PLAY IT
OFF FOR LAUGHS!

HE'S
GOING TO
HATE ME!
HE'S
GOING TO
BE SICK
OF ME!

HE MIGHT'VE
EVEN THOUGHT
I WAS A LITTLE
PRETTY.

IF IT WERE
SUNNY, AT
LEAST I'D
LOOK BETTER
THAN I DO
NOW.

OH GOD...
WHY COULDN'T
YOU BE ON MY
SIDE JUST THIS
ONE DAY?

BUT I
WORE
THIS THE
LAST
TIME WE
MET.

THIS
ONE-PIECE
AND
THIS
PURSE!!

THEN
THIS!

AND I
CAN'T
WEAR
THOSE ON
A RAINY
DAY!

BUT ONLY
ONE PAIR OF
SHOES WILL
MATCH THIS
OUTFIT!

TODAY I HAVE
TO BE THE
UGLIEST GIRL
ON EARTH!

BUT NO...

Aghhh!
I'm not giving up!

THEN THIS IS
IT! THIS, THIS
AND THIS!

NOTHING
LOOKS GOOD
ON ME! IT
DOESN'T
MATTER WHAT
I WEAR!

WAHHH/
I CAN'T
STAND
THIS!

IT...
IT
DOESN'T
MATCH
AT ALL.



WELL,
YOU'RE
LOOKING
EXTRA PRETTY
TODAY, SO I
FORGIVE
YOU.



...I'M
SORRY.



THAT
OUTFIT
LOOKS
REALLY
GREAT
ON YOU.



?!
うん



LET'S
GO, I BET
YOU'RE
HUNGRY.



THANK YOU FOR
LETTING IT RAIN.

I TAKE IT
BACK, GOD.



SORRY.

I'M
LATE...



HEY,
YOU'RE
THIRTY
MINUTES
LATE. DID
SOMETHING
HAPPEN?



こっん



I WAS
WORRIED.
YOU'RE
ALWAYS ON
TIME...
BESIDES,
IT WAS
RAINING.



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

Whether in kindergarten or high school, married or single, most girls want to feel pretty for the ones they love. Some people actually think that women become prettier when they're in love. I'm not convinced of that just yet, but it kind of makes sense. Let's see...

In order to be in love, you must fall in love. And when you fall in love with someone, you hope that person has fallen in love with you. So it's only natural that you would want to be as pretty as possible when this person sees you, right? Maybe girls cast a spell on themselves to make their love stronger? I don't know.

But what I do know is...at least twelve girls who have fallen in love have become prettier. Out of those, nine got married and became wonderful housewives. So please remember to cast your spells, so that you, too, will be able to experience the richness of love.

SCENE 7/KIREI

(Pretty) きれい

All girls want to be told they're pretty. Sure, some might say: "I don't want to be pretty," or "I'm pretty enough," but frankly, why wouldn't you want to be thought of as pretty?

I understand that beauty is subjective. What one person might consider beautiful, another might not. I also understand that *feeling* pretty and *being* pretty are two very different things. Some people might not think you're pretty, but if you *feel* pretty then that's all that matters.

With that being said, I'd like to share a story about something that happened to Igarashi Satsuki-chan in kindergarten. At the time, Sa-chan (as she's called by CLAMP) was a very quiet child, who was constantly bullied by all the kindergarten boys—except one—who would actually protect her.

Everyday, Sa-chan would look forward to seeing the boy. Before he came to class, she would smooth her uniform, wipe her schoolbag, and shine her shoes. And do you know why she would take such care before she saw the boy? Because she wanted to look pretty for the one she loved.

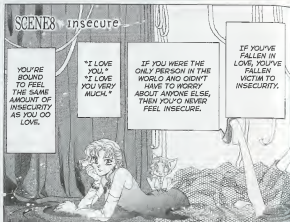
SCENE8 Insecure

YOU'RE
BOUND TO
FEEL
THE SAME
AMOUNT OF
INSECURITY
AS YOU DO
LOVE.

"I LOVE
YOU."
"I LOVE
YOU VERY
MUCH."

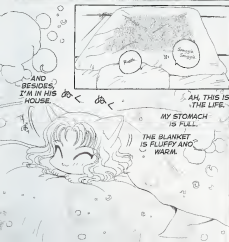
IF YOU WERE THE
ONLY PERSON IN THE
WORLD AND DIDN'T
HAVE TO WORRY
ABOUT ANYONE ELSE,
THEN YOU'D NEVER
FEEL INSECURE.

IF YOU'VE
FALLEN IN
LOVE, YOU'VE
FALLEN
VICTIM TO
INSECURITY.



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと



AND
BESIDES,
I'M IN HIS
HOUSE.



AM, THIS IS
THE LIFE.
MY STOMACH
IS FULL.
THE BLANKET
IS FLUFFY AND
WARM.



BECAUSE
I DON'T
NEED YOU
ANYMORE!

IT'S GOLD
OUTSIDE!
THE SNOW
IS COLD!
WHY WON'T
YOU LET ME
STAY IN YOUR
ROOM?!

WHY?!

WHAT?!
WHAT IS
IT?!

WHAT
HAPPENED?!

I WISH
I COULD
BE THIS
HAPPY
FOREVER.

I WISH I
COULD
STAY HERE
FOREVER.

OPEN THE
DOOR! IT'S
COLD! I'M SAD!
I'M LONELY!

DON'T BE
MEAN TO
ME! DON'T
DUMP
ME!!

OPEN
UP!

NOOOO!!
IT'S COLD!!
I DON'T
WANT TO GO
OUTSIDE, IT'S
COLD!



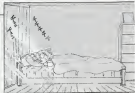


OPENING
THE DOOR
IS HARD
AFTER
THAT
DREAM...

I
LOVE
HIM,
AND
THAT'S
WHY I
FEEL
INSECURE.



WHAT
A BAD
DREAM...



DOES THIS MEAN
HE DOESN'T WANT
ME AROUND
ANYMORE?

WHAT?! THIS
IS THE SPARE
KEY THAT HE
GAVE ME, BUT
THE DOOR WON'T OPEN!



AGHHH!!

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?



MAYBE
I'M BEING
OJUMPEO.

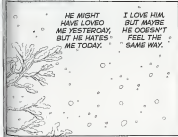
WAS THAT
A DREAM
A PREMONITION?!



HE TELLS
ME HE
DOESN'T
NEED ME
ANYMORE.

THE STORY
CHANGES,
BUT THE
END NEVER
CHANGES.

I'M WORRIED.



HE MIGHT
HAVE LOVED
ME YESTERDAY,
BUT HE HATES
ME TODAY.

I LOVE HIM,
BUT MAYBE
HE DOESN'T
FEEL THE
SAME WAY.



IT'S A
REOCCURRING
DREAM.



OH GOOD...
THAT DREAM
WASN'T A
PREMONITION.



NOTHING.



DID
YOU SAY
SOMETHING?



BUT WITH EACH
DAY, I FALL THAT
MUCH MORE IN
LOVE WITH YOU.

LOVE IS MATCHED
BY INSECURITY.
FOR THE NUMBER
OF DAYS YOU'RE
IN LOVE, THERE'S
AN EQUAL NUMBER
OF DAYS YOU'RE
INSECURE.



HURRY UP
AND GET
INSIDE.
YOU'LL
TURN INTO A
SNOWMAN.



UH,
UMM...MY
KEY...DIDN'T
WORK...



I TOLD
YOU LAST
WEEK THAT
I CHANGED
THE LOCK.

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

I got the idea for this story from a long phone conversation I had with a friend late one night. This friend was in love with an older man, and she told me how in love and happy she was with him. But at the same time, she wondered how long her happiness would last. It seems that the happier you are, the more scared you become that your happiness might end.

I've found that predicting the ways of the heart is more difficult than predicting tomorrow's exchange rates. And so, I don't think there's any way to eliminate all the insecurity involved with love. It's simply part of the package. (Not the prettiest wrapping, I know!)

Should any of you find a way to reduce your insecurity, then please let me know because I carry the heavy burden, too.

SCENE 8/FUAN

(Insecure) ふあん

I think girls become insecure when they fall in love. I can't speak for boys, but it would make sense that they would feel insecure, too. In order to love someone, you have to open your heart, and when you open your heart, it can be scary. It can also be uncomfortable and exhilarating, depending on how you look at it. But, when your heart is open, you are open as well.

Everything feels different when you're in love. Of course, you still feel sorrow and pain, but for the most part—love makes you happy. The flip side to love's euphoria is the fear that the magic and butterflies will disappear (and that's no fun!).

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

AND WHY
DOES
VALENTINE'S
DAY MAKE
US WANT TO
CONFESS
OUR LOVE?

HOW DID
VALENTINE'S
DAY COME
ABOUT?

I ALWAYS
WONDERED...

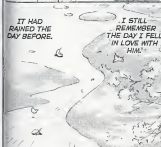
FEBRUARY
14TH IS
VALENTINE'S
DAY.

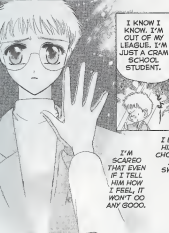
SCENE9 courage

St. Valentine

St. Valentine







I KNOW I KNOW. I'M OUT OF MY LEAGUE. I'M JUST A CRAM SCHOOL STUDENT.

I'M SCARED THAT EVEN IF I TELL HIM HOW I FEEL, IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD.

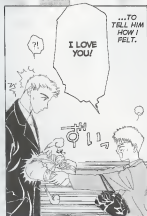


BUT IT'S ALWAYS ME CALLING HIM. HE NEVER CALLS ME.

I'VE ASKED HIM TO THE MOVIES SEVERAL TIMES AFTER THAT.

I BOUGHT HIM SOME CHOCOLATES AND A SWEATER.

TODAY IS VALENTINE'S DAY. A DAY TO TELL YOUR TRUE FEELINGS.



I LOVE YOU!

...TO TELL HIM HOW I FELT.



...I MIGHT NOT HAVE HAD THE COURAGE...

IF IT HADN'T BEEN VALENTINE'S DAY...



UGH...IT'S A SCENE RIGHT OUT OF A GIRLS' MANGA.



A DAY FOR BOYS
TO WORK UP THE
COURAGE TO ANSWER
THAT LOVE.

A SPECIAL DAY.

IT'S A DAY WHEN
GIRLS GET THE
COURAGE TO
PROFESS THEIR LOVE



And, the other reason was because we've never created a heroine who would say something like, "Oh, February 14th is Valentine's Day. I have to buy some chocolates and send them to that boy!" Especially in *Asuka* magazine, where the main character, Bou, is not in any position to receive any chocolates.

Anyway, back to Valentine's Day. I'm sure you all know that sending chocolates is not a universal ritual. I think the person who started the tradition of sending chocolate on Valentine's Day was the president of a candy company (I can't be sure, though).

But, regardless of the holiday's origin, Valentine's Day is still a special day for girls. February 14th is the one day we're "allowed" to tell someone how we feel.

I wanted to do a story about Valentine's Day, because we at CLAMP love special occasions. And Valentine's Day definitely qualifies as a special occasion. On Christmas, we get cakes. On Halloween, we watch horror movies on video (ok, maybe not). Anyway, we just love our events.

Just so you know, this story first appeared in the February issue of the magazine *Young Rose*. February is all about Valentine's Day. And Valentine's Day is all about beans! Actually, for a moment, I thought writing a bean story would be cool, but instead I decided on a Valentine's Day story, since I love chocolate so much. (Don't worry, I love beans too!)

We at CLAMP have had only a few opportunities to do a straight-up Valentine's Day story. One reason was because the magazine that publishes us doesn't run "seasonal" things.

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

I don't have any scientific evidence, but it seems that on Valentine's Day, girls have ten times the amount of courage than they normally have.

So...for those of you who have a certain someone, but are unable to express your feelings—Valentine's Day just might turbocharge your engine!



Serve out the
soups.
Shall I with
meat hand and
soup?

MY FAMILY
RUNS A RESTAU-
RANT. I GUESS
THAT'S WHY I'VE
LOVED TO COOK
SINCE I WAS
SMALL.

BUT MY
FIRST
IMPRESSION
OF HIM
WAS THAT
HE WAS
STRANGE.



Potato Salad-Large Potatoes

AFTERWARD,
I HEARD
THAT HE
LOVED
CHERRY
BLOSSOMS
AND HAD
BEEN TOO
EXCITED TO
CONTAIN
HIMSELF.



May I don't try it
all? I'm sure I
can.



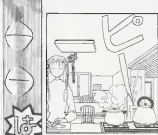
Watch
Watch

THAT DAY,
I'D MADE
BENTD.



W-HOOO A!

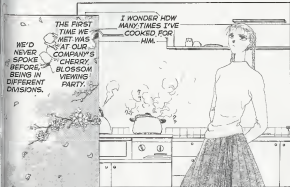
わ
や
ほ



THE
CURRY'S
SAFE.

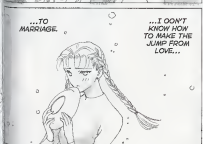
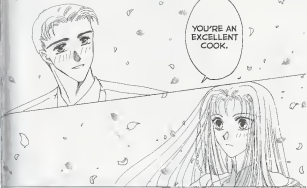
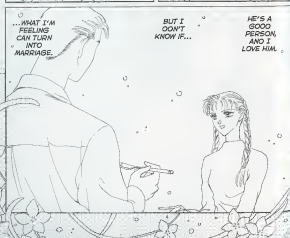
Shit
Shit

UGH. I HAVE
A BAD HABIT
OF LETTING
MY HANDS GO
IDLE WHEN I
GET LOST IN
THOUGHT.



THE FIRST
TIME WE
MET WAS
AT OUR
COMPANY'S
CHERRY
BLOSSOM
VIEWING
PARTY.
HE'D
NEVER
SPOKE
BEFORE,
BEING IN
DIFFERENT
DIVISIONS.

I WONDER HOW
MANY TIMES I'VE
COOKED FOR
HIM.



I SEE.
IT'S
SIMPLE.

THAT'S
NOT IT.

THAT'S
NOT IT.

NO.



TO GET
MARRIED...

...YOU
DON'T NEED
ANYTHING
SPECIAL.



IF CHERISH-
ING EVERYDAY
FEELINGS IS
ALL WE NEED,
WE'LL MAKE A
WONDERFUL
COUPLE.

I WANT TO
COOK FOR YOU
ALWAYS.



I JUST
WANT TO
BE WITH
YOU ALL
THE TIME,
AND THAT'S
WHAT
MATTERS.

LET'S
GET
MARRIED.

END

SECONDS,
PLEASE!



What's up?
You're smiling.



You're going
to say yes, aren't you?



...WANT
TO COOK
FOR YOU
ALWAYS.

WHEN YOU
EAT SO
HEARTILY,
IT MAKES
ME...



WHAT AN
APPETITE.



You ate half
a bag of
chips, didn't you?



UH,
WHAT
IS IT?
IS
SOME-
THING
WRONG?



Did you
mean that
earring?



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

Because I'm not married (and never have been), I have no idea what it's like to be a wife. I'm also not clued in to a husband's trials and tribulations. I have always thought marriage was a special thing that required a huge amount of resolve. So, when my three friends said that the reason they got married was because they thought they could live normal lives, I found it very surprising.

Then I realized something. I suppose the idea of two strangers becoming a couple could seem like a bizarre ritual. But, the "formality" of marriage only lasts a moment, and then, the couple goes back to their normal everyday life. The sun comes up again, just as it did before they got married. They wake up, eat breakfast, and go to work—just like the day before.

SCENE 10/FUTSU[^]

(Normal) ふつう

Hey readers, are you married yet? None of us at CLAMP is married. But, like most girls of marrying age, (how much longer do we have, anyways?) we all aspire to become brides.

I thought up this story when three of my friends got married, one after the other. Even though the women varied in age, occupation, and birthplace; they all shared one thing, which managed to leave a lasting impression on me. Each woman said they got married because they thought they'd have a "normal life" with their husbands.

None of the brides seemed to think that what they had said was significant, but I found it very interesting. Since I'm single, marriage is uncharted territory.

WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

Now, I understand that those three couples chose partners who they thought they could share a normal life with.

I'm afraid, however, it might be awhile before I get to experience either normalcy or marriage (ha ha).

WHAT
LIFE-
ALTERING
EVENT
CONVINCES
THEM TO
MARRY?

MARRIAGE
IS
CHALLENGING.

HOW DO
ALL THOSE
COUPLES
CROSS THE
THRESHOLD
FROM "LOVE"
INTO
"MARRIAGE"?

SCENE 11



BUT IT
MIGHT
BE
EASIER
IF I DID.

I DON'T
BELIEVE
THAT.

THE
FARTHER
THE
DISTANCE
BETWEEN
TWO PEOPLE,
THE
FARTHER
APART
THEIR
HEARTS
STRAY.

I WONDER
WHO
SAID THAT
LOVE AND
DISTANCE
WERE PRO-
PORTIONAL?

SCENE11 Apart

AT FIRST, WE
WERE CLOSE.

Does that
hurt you?



Clench!

...I HAVE NO
IDEA WHAT HE
MAY BE LIKE
TODAY.

THE LAST
TIME I SAW
HIM WAS
THREE
MONTHS
AGO.

HE HADN'T
CHANGED
AT ALL.

BUT...

IN THREE
MONTHS,
HE COULD
HAVE TONS
OF CHANCES
TO FIND A
NEW
LOVE.

UGH. AND
THE PLACE HE
MOVED TO IS
FAMOUS FOR
HAVING LOTS
OF PRETTY
GIRLS.

UGH.

ONLY, I HAVE
NO IDEA. ALL
I CAN DO IS
- SAY, "SEE
YOU AGAIN,"
AND HAVE
GOODBYE AT
THE STATION.

HE MIGHT
BECOME
MORE
WONDERFUL.

THREE
MONTHS CAN
CHANGE A
BOY.

NOW...

WE LIVED SO CLOSE
TO EACH OTHER WE
USED TO LAUGH AND
SAY THAT WE WERE
WASTING MONEY ON
PHONE BILLS.

His House

BY BIKE HIS
HOUSE WAS
ONLY THREE
MINUTES
AWAY.

My House

WE'RE STILL
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS,
AFTER ALL,
AND HE HAD
TO MOVE
BECAUSE OF
HIS FATHER'S
JOB.

I'M NOT
DOING
THIS LONG
DISTANCE
THING
BECAUSE
I LIKE IT.

...IT'S A
TOTAL LONG
DISTANCE
RELATIONSHIP.

WE
HAVE NO
CONTROL
OVER IT!



FIVE
MINUTES
HAVE
GONE
BY...

I'M
GETTING
WORRIED...

WILL
HE
REALLY
COME?



...AND THE
PROMISE WE HAD MADE THREE
MONTHS AGO. MAYBE HE'S
ALREADY OFF, WALKING ARM-IN-
ARM WITH SOME GIRL...



All right
then I'm
going

NO MATTER HOW
HARD I TRY,
IT SEEMS
IMPOSSIBLE.

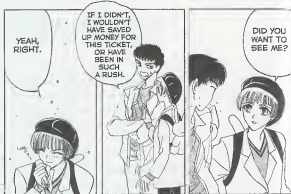


I GUESS THE
HEART CAN'T
OVERCOME
DISTANCE.



WHEN WE'RE THIS
FAR APART, WE
CAN'T EVEN HOLD
HANDS.





AS LONG AS YOU WANT TO SEE EACH OTHER, YOUR HEARTS WILL BE CLOSE TOGETHER.

IF YOUR HEART GROWS DISTANT, IT MIGHT BE FOR OTHER REASONS.

YOUR HEART DOESN'T GROW DISTANT BECAUSE YOU'RE APART.

AS LONG AS YOU WANT TO SEE EACH OTHER, LOVE CAN LAST.

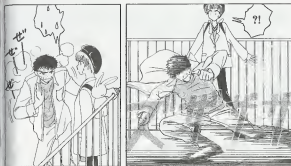
IT'S NOT DISTANCE THAT RUINS A RELATIONSHIP.

SO THAT'S IT.



WHAT ARE YOU SMILING ABOUT?

END



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと

On top of that, she's a magazine editor, so even if a date is planned on such-and-such day or such-and-such month, there's no telling whether or not writers will deliver their manuscripts on time.

Consequently, many dates were canceled, even though the boyfriend had cleared his busy schedule. Somehow, my friend has been able to sustain this Osaka-Tokyo long distance relationship.

When I see how many people fail at long distance relationships, I admire how my friend was able to continue moving forward with hers, even though they frequently quarreled. When I told her how I felt, she said: "Even though it might be a long distance relationship, in our hearts, we aren't far apart."

Ahh, so true. Despite the distance, there are lots of ways couples can communicate—by phone, by mail, by internet. As long as your hearts are together, your love will not die. There's some psychology for you!

P.S. Soon my friend will convert her long distance relationship into a long distance marriage!

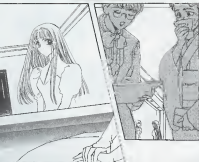
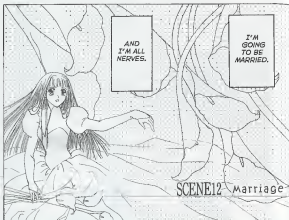
SCENE 11/HANARERU

(Apart) はなれる

Long distance relationships are challenging. The longest long-distance couple that I know is an Osaka-Norway pair. But, it doesn't have to be a trans-continental relationship for it to be considered long distance. Regardless of actual distance, when you can't see each other—it's hard.

This story is about my friend, a magazine editor, who told me about the time she professed her love to someone. All jobs are hard, but my friend was assigned to an extremely demanding division of a weekly magazine. For this job, she had to move from Osaka to Tokyo, and consequently, left her college boyfriend back in Osaka.

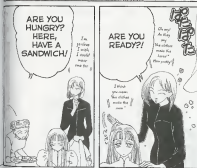
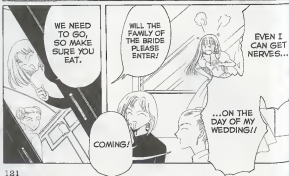
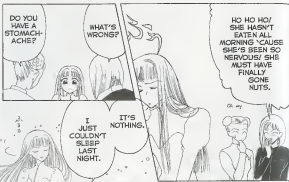
Osaka and Tokyo are about three hours apart by shinkansen (bullet train). Some people might be insulted if I said this was far, but still, it's not the kind of distance where you could casually plan an impromptu date.



WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO

わたしのすきなひと







I'M AFRAID
I MIGHT
CHANGE
ONCE I'M
MARRIED.

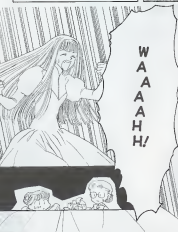


MAYBE HE'LL
FIND HE LIKED
ME BETTER
BEFORE
WE WERE
MARRIED.

THINGS MIGHT
NOT GO AS
PLANNED
ONCE WE'RE
MARRIED.



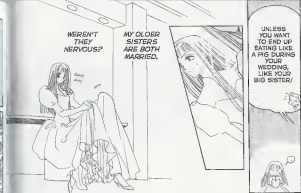
MAYBE I'M
RUSHING
INTO THIS.



W
A
A
A
H!
H!



IF WE GET
INTO A FIGHT,
BREAKING UP IS
NOT AS SIMPLE.



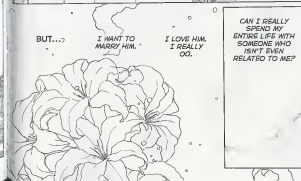
WEREN'T
THEY
NERVOUS?

MY OLDER
SISTERS
ARE BOTH
MARRIED.

UNLESS
YOU WANT
TO END UP
EATING LIKE
A PIG DURING
YOUR
WEDDING,
LIKE YOUR
BIG SISTER!



I FEEL LIKE
I'M TURNING
INTO SOMEONE
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT.



BUT...?

I WANT TO
MARRY HIM.

I LOVE HIM.
I REALLY
DO.

CAN I REALLY
SPEND MY
ENTIRE LIFE WITH
SOMEONE WHO
ISN'T EVEN
RELATED TO ME?

SO FOR NOW,
WHY DON'T WE
CONCENTRATE
ON DOING
MARRIED-
COUPLE
THINGS.



OKAY?



OKAY!



BEFORE, WE DID
THINGS THAT
SINGLE PEOPLE DO.
AND WHEN WE GET
MARRIED, WE'LL
DO THINGS THAT
ONLY A MARRIED
COUPLE CAN DO.



END

WOW.
WHAT A
PRETTY
BRIDE.



I/
I/!



I MIGHT
CHANGE
ONCE I'M
MARRIED!

I/ I/ I/

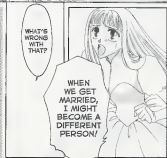


HUH?



WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH
THAT?

WHEN
WE GET
MARRIED,
I MIGHT
BECOME A
DIFFERENT
PERSON!



So when I was in high school and she came to me for advice, I said to her, "Now, you should do the things only a single person can do. And once you get married, you should do the things only a married couple can do."

Now, of course, I wasn't married, so who was I to say something like that, but she seemed satisfied with my answer. And now, she is living happily in Osaka with a wonderful husband and her two girls—Mako and Utako.

On that happy note, *The One I Love* has come to an end. Thank you so much for staying with us on this journey through love. I still may know nothing when it comes to love, but if we ever have a chance to meet again, you can tell me all about it, okay?

Although my older sister and I are eight years apart, she would always come to me for advice about everything from work, friends, and of course—love. When my sister was little, she knew that she wanted to be a kindergarten teacher when she grew up (which she eventually did become).

My sister was one of those happy-go-lucky types, who was always grounded and level headed. Sure, sometimes she felt anxious, but it never hindered her judgment or drive. Except when it came to the boy she was dating, and whether or not she should marry him.

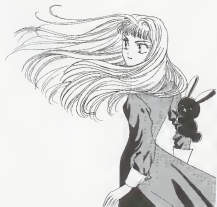
Usually, when my sister makes up her mind, she jumps right into things. But this time, even after three months, she still couldn't make a decision. I suppose the idea of marriage filled her with dread and uncertainty.

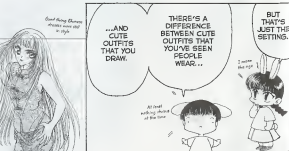
WATASHI NO SUKINAHITO
わたしのすきなひと

We dedicate this book to all those we adore.

END

PLANNING AND PRESENTED BY CLAMP





CLOTHES ARE A STANDARD ITEM, BUT THE OUTFITS HAVE TO MATCH THE CHARACTERS.

YOU KNOW, GUYS ARE HARD TO DRAW, TOO.

THERE ARE ONLY SO MANY "GUY" HAIRSTYLES.

GUYS WERE PRETTY MUCH JUST SUPPORTING PLAYERS.

WELL, I HAD FUN WITH THIS SERIES, BEING ABLE TO DRAW SO MANY GIRLS.

A SENIOR SALARYMAN? MAYBE IN A DIFFERENT MAGAZINE.

I'D LIKE TO BE ABLE TO DRAW A TASTEFUL SALARYMAN.

Like a Senior Salaryman magazine (see last)

WHEN I DRAW A SALARYMAN IN A SUIT, HE STILL LOOKS LIKE A KID.

I THINK THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS I NEED TO RECONSIDER.

SO ANYWAY, ALL OF US AT CLAMP WILL STRIVE TO WORK TOGETHER AS ONE!!

OF COURSE NOT!

SO WE CAN BE WINGS-MA UNITS, WE'RE OLD AND (GROANS)

NOBODY CAN GET IT PERFECT THE FIRST TIME. WE'LL WORK ON IT TOGETHER.

Oh, I promised to work it faster!

BUT IN ONE OF THE COLOR PANELS I FORGOT TO DRAW IN AN ANIMAL.

...WERE INCLUDED AS A RULE.

YOU FORGOT TO INCLUDE AN ANIMAL IN ONE OF THE TITLE PANELS TOO.

Oh, look, I forgot to take a picture

A CHINESE-STYLE BLOUSE AND A SEE-THROUGH BAG AND SHOES.

I JUST WANTED TO DRAW SOME GIRLS.

THAT'S THEM!

THAT'S RIGHT. ALTHOUGH DUE TO THE SIZE OF THE PICTURE I THINK MOST PEOPLE MISSED 'EM.

SPEAKING OF PATTERNS... IN EVERY CHAPTER IN THE PREVIEW PANELS, WE USED A DIFFERENT MOTIF EACH TIME. DID YOU CATCH IT?

It's nice when you can keep doing that in a manga.

I WANTED TO KEEP CHANGING THEIR OUTFITS TO MAKE THEM LOOK PRETTY.

GIRLS (MOSTLY) AND ANIMALS...